

Sweet names by The_BookDragon

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Summary:

Billy is confused by Steve Harrington

Sweet names

Author's Note:

So check the tags because there's homophobic language and Neil Hargrove's child abuse

Billy knew he was an asshole, and was used to being called an asshole. You spend over a decade of your life getting called that and at some point it will stick in your brain like an earworm. It's a basic memory association.

What Billy couldn't understand was Harrington. Harrington must have a few screws loose or just be insane, probably because of Billy almost beating him to death. The former King of Hawkins High was being friendly with Billy instead of afraid. It didn't make sense at all. When you hurt someone it went one of three ways; they lashed back, rolled over, or left. No ifs ands or buts about it. It was a bit jarring when Harrington did none of those things.

Either Harrington had finally snapped, or he thought that beating each other up was a declaration of friendship. Max was right, Billy should stay away from her friends if they were all like Harrington.

Avoiding Harrington didn't work. Somehow, Harrington always knew where to find Billy. It was annoying, nevermind that it made something inside Billy feel warm.

It was, "Hi, Billy," this, "Billy, you wanna eat together today," and, "Billy, how did you do on your AP paper," that. There were also the compliments.

First time it was, "think fast, hot stuff," Harrington had shouted as he threw the ball at Billy. Almost missing it, Billy had scrambled to catch it and fumbled twice. And it never stopped after that.

Every day was a new endearment; from, "gorgeous," to, "sunflower," to, "sweet cheeks." Billy was always caught off guard when Harrington used a nickname. Nobody but Billy was bothered by it.

"Oh yeah, Stevie called Tommy, sugar lips all of freshman year," Carol snapped her bubblegum holding her textbook on her hip, "Stevie calls people names all the time. Even when he was a kid he would give names to people."

"How do I get him to stop," Billy was about to roll his eyes as leaned against the wall. Although he was a bit curious about Tommy's nickname, he was more concerned about getting rid of his own army of nicknames.

Carol actually laughed in his face, "it's too late for that. He's given you a nickname, and he's never gonna stop until he forgets it."

Well, talking to Carol was a bust. Billy wouldn't even think about asking Harrington to stop. He had pride.

There wasn't much else to do. Well maybe stop acting like a little girl with a crush every time Harrington called out.

It was kind of nice though. Shaking his head, Billy wondered where that thought came from. Then came the biggest gut punch.

"Harrington will be partners with Hargrove," announced Mrs Williamson in English. Billy was so fucking screwed by being paired with Harrington and if Neil found out... Billy felt himself tense at the thought. Neil would think they were being, in his words, "a bunch of fags."

"Alright, goldilocks," Harrington dropped down and sat backwards on a chair, startling Billy from his spiraling thoughts, "we've got Huckleberry Finn or The Hobbit as our choices. Which one, sweet cheeks?"

"The Hobbit," Billy answered instinctively, ignoring that he had actually responded to being called "sweet cheeks". He was regretting even getting up this morning.

Smiling, "good idea, sunshine," Harrington rested his folded arms and chin on the back of the chair, "my place at six o'clock?"

"Yeah, see you there, pretty boy," Billy almost ran from the room as the bell rang.

Waiting in the Camaro, Billy rested his forehead against the steering wheel. How was it that Harrington managed to get him so flustered?

It wasn't any use denying it. Harrington had Billy blushing, which was a new experience. Damn Harrington for being a charming ass. Wait where did charming come from?

Max broke Billy from his thoughts by climbing into the car and angrily slamming it shut.

"What crawled up your ass, shitbird?" Billy was a little pissed that Max was being rough with his car, but the look on her face was like the day she had been arguing with Sinclair.

"Fuck off, Billy," her voice razor sharp as she glared at the dash, "just fuck off."

"Suit yourself," Max was actually angry enough to cuss at him. Something was very, very wrong.

Shifting into gear, he pulled out of the parking and headed to the house. Today wasn't a day Neil let Max go to the arcade. So, it was back to the house for Billy and Max, or there would be hell to pay.

The drive was silent except for the purr of the motor. Billy kept the radio off, and Max refused to talk.

Coming into the driveway, climbing out with their backpacks, and walking into the house, it all made Billy tense up. Neil was not going to be happy with Billy leaving tonight, or let him go with only a bit of fuss.

Luckily, Neil wasn't home yet. There was some time before the inevitable happened. Grabbing a glass of water for Max and a beer for himself, Billy sat down at the table as Max swung her backpack onto the floor and pulled out her homework. Billy grabbed his calculus assignment and got to work. The scratching of pencils on paper was the only sound as time passed, until the rumbling of Neil's truck was heard.

Glancing at each other, Max and Billy snatched their homework off the table and scrambled to their rooms and rooms. Billy tossed his

backpack under his bed and lit a cigarette. Max would be in her room pretending to read a *Seventeen* magazine while applying clear nail polish.

Neil's voice was loud and clear as he told Susan, "those fags are getting what they deserve."

Billy couldn't hear Susan answer, but she was probably trying to deflect the conversation. Then she would make some dry chicken and asparagus for dinner. Just how Neil liked food; edible and flawed so he could complain about it.

Dashing his cigarette, Billy slipped on a jacket and walked out of his room.

"Where are you going," the sound of Neil's casual drawl nearly stopped Billy short.

"I have a partner project for English. My partner asked me to come over, sir," Billy was very casual about it and hoped that would be enough.

"When?" Neil came close using his extra height to tower over Billy.

"At six, sir," Billy kept his voice steady while showing respect to Neil.

Holding still, Billy waited for what Neil would do next.

"Wallet," Neil held out his hand as Billy handed over his wallet, "Susan, set only three places tonight. Billy won't be eating tonight." Handing Billy back his driver's license, Neil pocketed Billy's wallet along with all of Billy's cash.

Only when Billy was in the Camaro and about half a mile away, did he finally relax a bit. It could have gone much worse if Neil had been any less forgiving tonight. Luckily, it was only not being able to get dinner tonight.

Harrington's address was practically public knowledge by now, everyone knew where King Steve lived. Actually seeing it was a whole other experience. The house was bordering on being a mansion compared to the other houses here in Hawkins.

Ringling the doorbell, Billy waited in front of the double doors. And Harrington actually answered pretty quickly, with a towel over one shoulder and a great big smile on his face. He actually looked happy to see Billy.

Harrington was so excited when he got to the steps, he almost pulled Billy into the house. "Hey, big guy," Harrington took the towel from his shoulder and started wiping his hands, "I made lasagna."

Billy froze halfway down the hallway, "You made dinner?"

"Yeah, I asked you over kinda late," he passed by Billy, "I thought we might get hungry while working."

Billy wondered if Harrington was even real, or if this was this a hallucination. People just weren't like this, but Billy couldn't resist following Harrington.

The smell as Billy entered the kitchen was heavenly. He suddenly felt starved.

"Here you go, curls," Harrington handed Billy a plate, "I've got our book on the dining table."

Sitting down and just eating without any tension had Billy loosening up in ways he didn't even realize.

Conversation about the project was easy, and it soon turned to teasing each other. It was nice and Billy wished things didn't have to end.

A pattern started that night; Harrington--Steve--made dinner, they worked on their project, and teased each other mercilessly.

But it was only a week before things came apart. Neil was angry and was not happy with Billy leaving every night. The bruises on Billy were for not being a respectful or responsible son, according to Neil.

Neil took Billy's keys and threw him out of the house for the night, as if that made sense. Billy stumbled down the sidewalk, cold nipping at his skin. Billy curled in on himself and tried to keep warm in his shirt. He didn't have shoes or a jacket on and it was freezing outside.

The lights of a car blinded him as he trudged along. It slowed to a crawl as it got closer, and one of the windows rolled down.

"Gorgeous," Steve's voice drifted out of the car, "what the heck happened?"

Billy didn't answer.

"Please," Steve looked upset, " get in the car, Billy."

Billy got in the car.

Steve drove them back to his place. Nothing was said, but Steve's face spoke volumes of how angry he was. It continued as Steve brought Billy into the house and got out the first aid kit.

"Who-,"

"You know who, Steve," Billy was tired as Steve cleaned where the skin had broken over Billy's ribs, "why were you at my house?"

"A good friend told me you were staying out too late," Steve was cryptic in his reply, but it was pretty obvious Max had called.

"Why did you come, Steve," Billy had an idea of what it could be, but he wanted to hear it from Steve.

"Because you're important to me, baby," Steve set down his supplies to cup Billy's face. Placing their foreheads together, he stroked his thumb over Billy's cheek. Steve leaned in and kissed Billy.

It was not a heavy kiss, but something warm and gentle. Billy parted his lips to nibble on Steve's bottom lip. Slowly and quietly deepening the kiss until they both came up for air.

"I love you," Steve whispered to Billy.

And with a smile, "I love you too." Billy spoke with all the warmth that had been building since Steve had first called Billy a nickname.

Author's Note:

Hi you can let me know what you think in the comments or on tumblr @booksfoxesandcoffee